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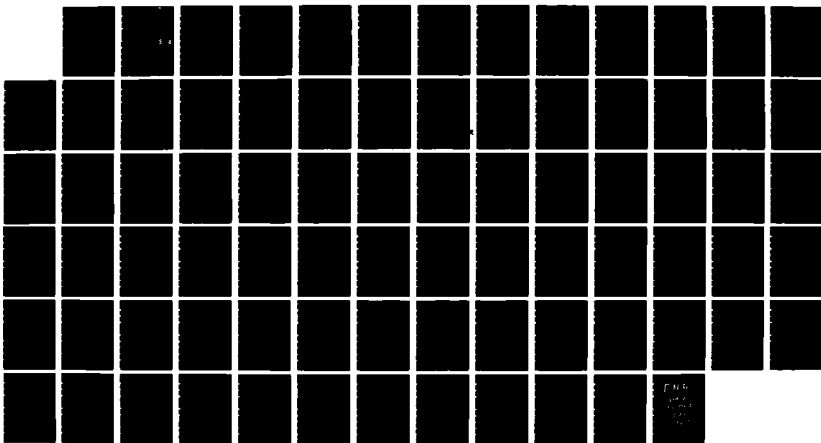
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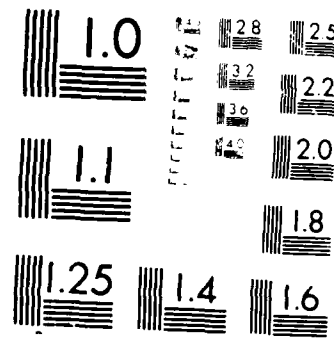
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A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE ON  
ACTIVE CITIZENS LAW ENFORCEMENT GROUPS

STEVE ASHER  
B.A., CHAMINADE UNIVERSITY OF HONOLULU, 1981

THESIS

Submitted in partial satisfaction of  
the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF SCIENCE

in

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at

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SUMMER  
1987

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A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE ON  
ACTIVE CITIZENS LAW ENFORCEMENT GROUP

A Thesis

by

Steve Asher

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26 July 1987  
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Criminal Justice-----

Abstract

of

A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE ON  
ACTIVE CITIZENS' LAW ENFORCEMENT GROUPS

by

Steve Asher

Statement of Problem

This thesis is a historical perspective on active citizens' law enforcement groups. The research traces the origin and development of active community crime control in America from its beginning to the present. Following a review of the available literature, issues and controversies surrounding active community crime control are examined.

Source of Data

The data utilized in this study was obtained through a literature review in which numerous sources were considered in order to trace the emergence and development of active community crime control within the United States.

Conclusions Reached

Based on the results of the review of the literature, three conclusions were reached. First, active community crime control programs have grown in popularity since the 1960's. Currently, community crime control is endorsed by citizens, police, and scholars. Secondly, measuring the effect of community crime control programs has proven to be inexact because of difficulties present in the gathering and analysis of crime data. However, within the past decade the quality of data and research has improved. Thirdly, there is an absence of professional training for leaders of crime prevention groups. Without adequate training for both the block leaders and crime control practitioners, community crime control programs will fail to achieve their optimum potential.

Committee Chair's Signature of Approval

*Thomash Phelps*

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## DEDICATION

To Malinda, whose encouragement, inspiration, and caring kept me on track and at pace.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

It is a pleasure to thank Dr. Thomas R. Phelps for his patient and wise counsel during the time this study was being completed. I am also indebted to James M. Poland for his encouragement and suggestions. I thank my friend Dave Pelaez who spent a great deal of time proofing my material and offering constructive criticism. Finally, I extend my thanks to the United States Air Force for sponsoring my work in this study.

## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

Each one of us is in some way affected by the high crime rate in America today. Some have been victims of crimes, some will be victims of crime and all will pay taxes to combat crime. Many citizens feel that paying taxes should be the extent of their involvement. Unfortunately, this is far from the truth. If we want our communities to be safe we must take an active role in crime prevention. In 1973, the National Advisory Commission on Criminal Justice Standards and Goals stated:

Combating crime is not solely the responsibility of law enforcement agencies. Crime reduction can come about only if the community, criminal justice personnel, and individuals work together.<sup>1</sup>

The re-establishment of peaceful and safe urban environments depends upon the ability of residents, with a stake in order maintenance, to prevent certain types of disruptive behavior in their neighborhoods. Newman has a strong belief that citizens of a community have a major role in crime control. He believes improved environmental designs will increase community vigilance and allow individual citizens to deter crime by reducing crime opportunities.<sup>2</sup>

Criminal justice professionals readily and repeatedly admit that, in the absence of citizen assistance, neither more manpower, nor improved technology, nor additional money will enable law enforcement to shoulder the monumental burden of combating crime in

America. The need today is for a more balanced allocation of law enforcement duties between specialists and citizenry—for citizens to reassume many of their discarded crime prevention responsibilities.<sup>3</sup>

Active citizen law enforcement groups provide the vehicle that can bring the specialist and citizens together.

#### STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The high crime rate and civil unrest period of the 1960s was the growth period for community crime control programs as are known today.<sup>4</sup> Initially, police officials' reactions ranged from staunch opposition to wait and see approaches. Many of these programs began because citizens felt the police were unable or not willing to reduce crimes in their neighborhood.

In 1974, the National Institute of Justice began to evaluate the LEAA anti-crime programs like citizen crime reporting programs and citizens' patrol projects. Without a solid-base line to judge success or failure, evaluations were difficult to conduct. But the Justice System Improvement Act of 1979 did acknowledge the importance of Anti-Crime programs and established formula grants for state and local governments.<sup>5</sup>

Today, police officials readily admit that active and serious citizen involvement is essential if crime is to be substantially reduced. Police know that they alone can not combat crime effectively. Crime control can only be

successful if police are responsive to the needs of the community they serve and if the community they serve actively supports the police.<sup>6</sup> In fact, increasing police manpower and resources has often been counterproductive because "police forces operating without community consent, direction, and control are a wasted effort-more irritant than deterrent."<sup>7</sup>

Unfortunately, both the Carter and Reagan presidential administrations have severely cut back funds for projects of this type; but there is still hope. In the eighties we now see many local police agencies fostering the growth of citizens' crime control groups. The police know, as the Dubow and Podolefsky study has shown, anti-crime volunteers are not different from other civic volunteers.<sup>8</sup> They want to support their police and improve their neighborhoods.

It is interesting to note that this support is not only growing in white middle-class neighborhoods but in neighborhoods of all economic and racial mixes. However, it's well documented that the success rate in lower income communities is not as encouraging as in higher income communities, but success is possible when the interest and leadership is there.<sup>9</sup>

#### IMPORTANCE OF THE PROBLEM

There is an emergence of a perspective that is popular today, even among many criminal justice professionals,

namely, that the criminal justice system might better be seen as a supplemental resource for citizen crime prevention programs. Effective crime prevention would then be seen as a function of informal, non-bureaucratic social controls imposed by ordinary citizens in the course of their daily activity.<sup>10</sup> In today's mood of less government spending and get tough stance, citizen crime prevention programs are in the right environment for nurturing and expanding.

In the Handbook of Loss Prevention and Crime Prevention the author gives four examples of the types of results that can take place if active citizen involvement takes place in a constructive manner:

1. An intensive media campaign in Portland, Oregon, coupled with increased participation in neighborhood Watch organizations reduced the residential burglary rate.
2. The Maricopa County, Arizona, Sheriff's Posse has nearly eliminated burglaries in one senior community through training and wholehearted participation from senior citizen volunteers.
3. The citizens of Seattle, Washington, continue to expand their Neighborhood Watch program as they see evidence that "Watch" neighborhoods have fewer crime-related problems.
4. In rural Oskaloosa, Iowa, the Crime Prevention Coalition, which began with a handful of senior citizen volunteers now counts over three hundred enrolled in watching for suspicious neighborhood activities.<sup>11</sup>

The current mood of America is "we're fed up and we're not going to take it". Americans want to help fight crime. In the early seventies it was estimated that there were over 800 anti-crime programs in the United States.<sup>12</sup> Today there

is an estimated 50,000 in the state of California alone.<sup>13</sup>

#### DEFINITION OF TERMS

Terms like "neighborhood crime prevention group", "citizens crime control programs" and "citizens police action groups" have been in use for decades. Varying definitions of these terms will be noted in the individual programs initiated within diverse jurisdictions. Thus, a "neighborhood crime prevention program" in New York might be a program designed to constructively occupy youths' leisure time in hopes of reducing the amount of time devoted to criminal activity.<sup>14</sup> A neighborhood crime prevention program in Sacramento might refer to a plan that encourages community members to actively patrol their streets and report any suspicious activity to the police. To insure the reader and the author are thinking in like terms the following definitions are provided:

1. Active Citizen Law Enforcement Groups. These groups actually assist police by being vigilant in their communities and reporting suspicious activity to the police. Their vigilance can take place from their home or through organized mobile patrols. The key factor is that they actively assist law enforcement officials by observing, reporting and cooperating with the police in their community.

2. Defensive anti-crime groups. These types of



organizations encourage citizens to take action that will make them a less desirable target for criminals. An example of the type of activity these groups would engage in would be "Operation Identification". This police citizen joint effort is designed to make personal property less attractive because the engraving of social security numbers on personal property make the item identifiable as stolen property.

3. Citizen-police councils. These are advisory committees that work directly with the police administrator. Their primary goal is to ensure the police are responsive to the will and needs of the community.

4. Community crime control programs. This is an all encompassing term that can refer to any program or combination of programs that strives to reduce crime or the fear of crime in the targeted community's neighborhood.

This paper is a descriptive study of the emergence and growth of active citizens' law enforcement groups. Chapter two will trace the major development of active citizens' law enforcement groups from the 1800s to the 1980s. Chapter three, through a literary review, will expose major issues and controversies surrounding citizens' law enforcement action groups. In chapter four, the author will make recommendations that will enhance success rates and growth in active citizens' law enforcement programs.

## CHAPTER ONE

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## CHAPTER TWO

### HISTORICAL OVERVIEW OF ACTIVE COMMUNITY CRIME CONTROL

An active interest in controlling behavior of people living in groups is as old as mankind itself. Whether on a informal level such as in familial, kinship, or neighborhood groups or on a level encompassing larger political entities such as tribes, municipalities, states, and nations, an integral element for the survival of any social group is the ability it has to control and direct the behavior its members.<sup>1</sup>

The concept of citizen participation in "community crime prevention," as it is known today, is certainly not a new answer to an old problem. Henry Fielding clearly defined the same principles in the sixteenth century when he stated that the two elements necessary for a crime-free society, according to Fielding, were: (1) a well-trained police force and (2) an informed and cooperative citizenry, working together to maintain a safe society.<sup>2</sup>

However, while many citizens agree with the Fielding theory and the recent reinforcement that crime prevention should be a shared effort with law enforcement, a historical perspective shows too few have made a commitment to actually participate.

A review of the literature on crime control reveals that the community crime control historical development in America can be directly linked to the transitional changes that took place in policing in America.<sup>3</sup> Thus, community crime control can be divided into five main periods that coincide with the development of police in America: The

1800'S to the early 1900's, the early 1900's to 1960's, the 1970's and the 1980's.<sup>4</sup>

### THE 1800's

There was political and visible change in policing between 1800 and 1920. Policing shifted from traditional attachment to the judicial branch of government to direct control by municipal administration.<sup>5</sup> This change from an informal, lax community effort to a formal, rule-governed, militaristic organization was a major political shift. With this major transition of the police organization, its specific duties changed from a "general concern with the orderly functioning of cities, a small part of which was catching criminals; to the function in the mid and late nineteenth century of controlling the dangerous class, with a growing emphasis on crime control."<sup>6</sup>

In the 1800's, as now, the criminal arrest power "has always been the ultimate formal power underlying the police, But we must keep in mind that this in no way expresses the totality of police behavior, either in the past or today". Active community involvement in law enforcement has waxed and waned with the the development of police agencies in the United States; but, community involvement has never ceased to exist. In the 1800's a citizen chose to pay others to perform specific crime control functions.<sup>7</sup> They did not choose to give the police absolute authority in crime

control.<sup>8</sup> The controversy surrounding the introduction of uniformed police caused an example of the public's concern over excessive police power.<sup>9</sup>

Prior to 1844, most American cities used the English watch system.<sup>10</sup> Under the original concept, citizens on a rotating bases "were volunteered" to stand watch during the night. Individuals, tired of this duty, began to hire the unemployed of the city to substitute for them. This practice became the norm and by the 1800's the watch of many cities in America was composed of a disreputable force of aged derelicts. This system had become ineffective and was severely criticized.<sup>11</sup>

In 1829, Sir Robert Peel established the metropolitan police of London. The force was organized along military lines; however, their uniforms were not military in appearance and they were allowed to carry only truncheons.<sup>12</sup> The general public, at first, was opposed to the police and felt they would become a form of military control. But the police did not become a dictatorship and once the public learned that the police force was not and would not be armed they began to support the police.

In 1844, New York city, hoping to duplicate England's success, formed its police department along the line of Peel's Scotland Yard. By 1850 Boston and many other police departments followed this pattern. The first American policemen did not wear uniforms but in 1855 the Boston police wore a very military type uniform and soon thereafter

other major police departments followed Boston's lead. This is an important development because up until this time it was un-American for police to wear uniforms.<sup>13</sup>

The rapid growth of police forces and strong military appearance and military structure effectively isolated the police from the citizens.

The uniform concretely symbolizes the changed system social control represented by the new police, asserting publicly and unequivocally the difference between the old and the new. It is not surprising that both police officers and the public sometimes resisted and mocked the first uniforms, for they depersonalized the wearer, made obvious the para-military nature of the new system.<sup>14</sup>

This new system from its inception was hampered by a lack of full public support for the development of an efficient well-paid and well-trained police organization. Political manipulation and misconceptions of the place of the policeman as part of the administration rather than legislative machinery of the law have further reduced his image. Contemporary police systems are outgrowths of the "watch" system which in its turn was a concomitant development in the changing social structure of England and which was transplanted on American soil with all of its weaknesses.<sup>15</sup>

#### THE EARLY 1900's

The 1920's and 1930's were difficult times for America, the American people and a developing police force. Though this was the period of the neighborhood officer on his beat patrol many major problems strained police and community cooperation. Prohibition produced a national scandal in which citizens openly violated and disregarded the law at their option.<sup>16</sup> Prohibition, followed by the great

depression, and combined with gross deficiencies in law enforcement, contributed to mounting frustration about crime and criminals. The police had developed and now had to overcome a public image that often displayed them as inept.

In American Police Systems, Fosdick put it this way:

Instead of confidence and trust, the attitude of the public towards the police is far more often than not one of cynicism and suspicion, expressing itself occasionally, in violent attacks which are as unjust as they are ineffective.<sup>17</sup>

By the 1920's police and scholars alike realized that strong community involvement was needed to combat ever-rising crime rates. The police alone were not up to this monumental task. Noted authors such as Sheldon and Eleanor Glueck were suggesting the need to generate community involvement in crime control.<sup>18</sup> But their idea of direct community involvement in order to help police fight crime differs from the concept as it is understood today.

The Gluecks and other scholars of the time limited community involvement to correcting social disorganization that caused young people to become criminals (e.g., poverty, broken and distorted home life, badly occupied leisure time, culture conflict and the like). They proposed that if these social problems can be removed from the environment of childhood and youth, the less possibility there is that criminal careers will be established.

As a result of this community-involvement approach to crime, new programs were being implemented to improve home life, schools, recreational centers, churches, and welfare



agency for the young. Programs like: Crime Prevention Through Citizenship Training at the George Junior Republic, Summer Camp for Delinquent Boys at Greenwood Lake, Delaware, Ohio, the All Nations Boys Club, Los Angeles and the Crime Prevention Program of the Y.M.C.A., St. Louis.<sup>19</sup>

The major police departments of the nation also embraced this type of crime prevention approach. Police departments, like most sociologists, limited their crime prevention activity to efforts that would prevent juvenile delinquency. The June 16, 1931 amendment to the Greater New York Charter is a classic example of the police role in crime prevention in the early 1900's:

There shall be a bureau in the Police Department to be known as the Crime Prevention Bureau, to be organized and maintained for the prevention of crime and delinquency among minors and for the performance of such other duties as the Commissioner of Police may assign thereto. The said bureau shall be in charge of a deputy police commissioner to be designated by the commissioner.<sup>20</sup>

This trend in community involvement continued into the 1960's. But the 1960's were a major turning point in the community crime prevention theory and practice.

### THE 1960's

The end of the 1960's brought widespread disillusion with the government's capacity to deal with the social problems in urban areas. Over the decade, and amid economic prosperity, city welfare rolls and reported crime rates had risen steadily while morbidity and mortality rates failed to decline, despite increasing amounts of federal funds allocated to addressing these problems.<sup>21</sup>

Cohen's summary of the 1950's and 1960's reveal major factors that impacted on citizen and police community relations:

In the 1950's, the policeman enjoyed the relative stability of a society recently mobilized consisted of many returned veterans resentful of but accustomed to a high degree of authoritarianism. Much of the population could and was described by social critics as apathetic. The 1960's are seen as a period of great fluidity of structural changes. Traditional social institutions have been threatened or torn down. New ones, mostly of an experimental nature, have emerged. Civil Rights legislation and programs, social welfare agencies and institutions on a massive, public scale, educational programs in hallowed institutions have been questioned; the tidy structures of family and religion are no longer secure from questioning. And, somewhere in between these dislocations of social structure stands the policeman, relatively untrained, underpaid, suffering from low morale, who attempts to carry out his role of decision-maker and/or protector and guardian of the law on the streets or frontline of the community. The major policy-makers, the governmental officials, are themselves most frequently overwhelmed with the tasks of decision-making. Whereas, they may have built-in mechanisms in the political machinery for "buckpassing," delaying or avoiding the issues, the policeman is confronted with issues which demand of him immediate solutions.

Without the clear-cut direction of a governmental organization in the numerous activities that the policeman must by the nature of his position find himself in, he quite frequently must decide matters on his own.

As a member of a semi-military organization, authoritarian in structure with the boundaries of discretionary authority loosely defined or undefined, his priority move is to act strongly authoritatively and, in doing so, frequently overextends his authority. A second move he sometimes makes, mainly due to his sensitivity to public approval or at least an awareness of the public eye upon him, is not to act at all in order to avoid an incident. In the first instance, we see the "head beater" in the gathering crowd or potential riotous group situation. In the second instance, we see the policeman (on our television screens) standing by as shops are looted in a ghetto area riot. The policeman is found guilty in these scenes of commission and omission, and in

both ways overextending his weakly defined authority as protector and guardian of the public order.<sup>22</sup>

This negative attitude towards police played a major role in the development of a new response to crime in the United States. Jane Jacobs was one of the first to recognize that citizens, not the police, play the major role in preventing crime.

The first thing to understand is that public peace... of cities is not kept primarily by the police.... It is kept primarily by an intricate, almost unconscious network of voluntary controls and standards among the people... and enforced by the people.<sup>23</sup>

Soon other sociologists and scholars were echoing similar views:

Residents of a city or a neighborhood have the power in their capacity to subvert crime. The key to their intervention in a crime is their willingness to cooperate with the police." However, as today's crime statistics show many people have negative attitudes toward the police, and so many crimes go unreported. Whenever crimes are reported, it is usually done in a manner which involves some sort of personal gain for the reporter rather than a unique social consciousness on his part. It is questionable whether the public peace can be maintained without the public support and help of the citizenry in a positive way, or at least more participation than it now acquires. In order to involve the citizens of a community, an effort must be made to show that the police do indeed care.<sup>24</sup>

By 1963, citizens, many who felt they were oppressed by authoritative police forces or frustrated with what they perceived to be high crime rates, united and designed neighborhood crime control groups. Many of these groups were formed in lower income minority neighborhoods, some were middle-income neighborhoods, and fewer were upper income neighborhoods. The racial composition was equally

diverse with some groups being interracial, some all black, others all white and others representing specific ethnic groups.<sup>25</sup>

In 1968 the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration (LEAA) was established as a response to rising crime, citizen insecurity, and the fear of crime phenomenon. The agency had received a dual mandate from Congress to help the states in their crime control efforts, and to improve the quality and capabilities of the criminal justice system. A substantial portion of the 1.4 billion dollars allocated to the LEAA was devoted to active community crime control projects nationwide.<sup>26</sup>

### THE SEVENTIES

The question was asked in the early seventies whether urban problems were really amenable to rational solutions, and whether certain policy goals were not based on highly uncertain assumptions.

Because there had been no visible impact on crime after four years and expenditures of over \$1.4 billion of federal funds distributed to the state level, a congressional committee charged the LEAA with failure. However this same report contradicted itself when it admitted that there was no way to tell how effective any of the LEAA programs were because the criminal justice system lacked qualified indicators by which it might estimate

program success or failure.<sup>27</sup> Crime rate reports were on a voluntary basis and were not standardized. The problem was exacerbated because research in the criminal justice field was not carried out often enough and when it was done, it was not done by professionals.

Though the LEAA had its limitations and critics, it was not all in vain. In the early seventies the criminal justice system realized the need to devise better data banks and they recognized that a systems approach was needed to effectively deal with crime. The systems approach as related to criminal justice can be seen in terms of the continuity of criminal justice "services" when systematic management is applied to justice functions. Simply put the police, courts and correction departments all work towards the same goal, reducing the crime problem, they therefore need to work in a manner that insures continuity. In this new approach citizens would play a major role.<sup>28</sup>

The success of the criminal justice system in dealing with the growing volume of crime and delinquency depends to an important degree upon the active participation of citizens and the community in preventive work to reduce the crime problem to manageable proportions and render it amenable to control measures. This is not to suggest that citizens and communities alone prevent crime. Crime prevention involves a broad-based combination of activities. But, citizen involvement in prevention holds important potential that should not be overlooked in formulating strategies to combat crime and delinquency.<sup>29</sup>

THE LATE 1970's and 1980's

In the late seventies and eighties many of these assumptions were tested and direct, active citizen involvement began to be professionally evaluated. Initially police officials were skeptical about active citizen involvement in crime control. They recognized the value of Boys Clubs and police sponsored sports programs but to have citizen patrol in their jurisdictions was considered an inappropriate action. Some clubs caused disfavor because they tried to supplant police authority in a few instances. At least one group started out primarily to investigate police and catch them in actions which could be used against the police department.<sup>30</sup>

Fortunately groups of this type were few in number and did not endure. The police were not the only group concerned about direct citizen involvement. Some citizens remain concerned that active participation may bring charges of spying in neighborhoods. Such attitudes have harmed neighborhood involvement programs. Despite these negative observations, recognition of the importance of citizen participation remains, and many community-minded concerned individuals are contributing to the success of this approach to crime control. In California alone there are an estimated 50,00 active citizens crime prevention programs.<sup>31</sup> This figure is remarkable considering the fact that federal funds are no longer available and programs of this type must be self sufficient or rely on limited state funds.

The 1970's can be considered an important research

period for active community crime control and law enforcement in general. The LEAA funds created much interest and scholars from different fields to initiated programs that fulfilled federal funding guidelines. The 1980's lack LEAA funding and, as a consequence, little research compared to the 1970's is being conducted. But the effort and results of active community law enforcement groups have solidified support by most major city law enforcement leaders. In the 1980's the proponents for active citizen involvement are no longer primarily made up of sociologists and juvenile justice practitioners. The new champions of this form of crime control are police administrators and experienced policemen who fully realize that only through the full support and active assistance of the community can they be effective in controlling crime.

But, active citizen law enforcement groups are not without their critics. The critics of active community law enforcement groups, as well as proponents, have raised provocative issues and controversies. Chapter three will utilize the literature review format to explore them.

## CHAPTER TWO

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### CHAPTER THREE

#### REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE: ISSUES AND CONTROVERSIES ENCOMPASSING ACTIVE COMMUNITY CRIME CONTROL PROGRAMS

This chapter will examine the current literature on the subject of active community crime control, and explore issues and controversies that are related to the concept. Though the origins of community crime control methods lie deep in our history, this chapter will concentrate on developments and findings covering the period between 1960 and the present. It is within this time period that the most active growth in community crime control programs occurred. In addition, this is also the only time period in which scientific studies have been conducted in the area of active community crime control.<sup>1</sup> The major issues, studies, and trends will be closely examined in the remaining portion of this chapter. This task has been limited by the existence of numerous writings on community crime control which are emotional and unobjective. Many authors seeking implementation of their programs to interested police departments. Many of these programs lacked performance objectives and evaluation measures.<sup>2</sup>

In ongoing community crime control programs, the primary purpose of impact evaluation is to assist program managers in making more effective decisions about future program developments.

#### EVALUATION PROBLEMS

In the experimental or demonstration program, the primary purpose of impact evaluation is to develop knowledge for use by researchers and by agencies wishing to duplicate an experimental demonstration project. The evaluation component is likely to be a large fraction of the total effort, involving rigorous scientific work by specialized professionals. This often proves to be too expensive for local programs and is not included in the implementation process.<sup>3</sup>

A program is capable of measuring its actual effect on crime patterns only when the degree to which its plans and activities have achieved specific results can be determined and analyzed by researchers. Without this knowledge relating to results, it is impossible to accurately implement a plan for subsequent activities. Moreover, it may be difficult to convince a community that it is worthwhile to continue investing in and cooperating with the crime prevention program. Effective evaluation can do the following:

- a. Measure the degree of progress toward specific objectives and toward the general goal of reducing crime;
- b. Identify weak and strong points of program operations and suggest changes;
- c. Compare efficiency and effectiveness of existing program activities with other possible program activities;
- d. Challenge underlying program assumptions and improve the quality of program objectives;
- e. Suggest new procedures and approaches;

- f. Provide for timely recognition of negative program effects;
- g. Help establish priorities for resource allocation;
- h. Increase public support for successful approaches and reduce emphasis on unsuccessful approaches;
- i. Provide standards against which to measure achievement; and
- j. Develop a critical attitude among staff and advisory personnel and increase communication and coordination among them.<sup>4</sup>

Results of local and national programs are not always measured in a scientific manner. The developers of the community anti-crime program often lack professional expertise and as a result use only police data as a source of determining success or failure. Police data reflects only reported crime and, therefore, does not provide a true portrayal of the total crime problem. Even professionals face major obstacles that are difficult to overcome when attempting to evaluate community crime control programs. Rosenbaum, using the findings of Yin and other scholars, developed a list of some of these difficulties.

- (1) The desire to include identifiable and measurable objectives in an evaluation usually means that investigators will rely on crime data as a central outcome measure.
- (2) Target communities are generally characterized by a complex of diffuse geographic, political, and social factors. This complexity creates a formidable barrier to the selection of equivalent comparison or control areas.
- (3) Planned interventions and activities are always subject to unavoidable complications and vagaries that inevitably arise during the mundane day-to-

day administration of programs.

- (4) The pressure to demonstrate reductions in crime to justify the continued support and funding of projects hampers attempts to measure long-term effects.
- (5) The impact of competing efforts (such as employment programs, police patrol strategies) may be difficult to separate from the diminutive effects of typical crime prevention projects.
- (6) Often, successful anticrime projects arise out of informal control mechanisms that govern the quality of social interactions within local communities. There is no definite way to measure when these informal patterns initially emerged<sup>5</sup> and, hence, when the "treatment" actually began.

Despite these seemingly insurmountable problems, sound implementation and evaluation of community crime control programs is possible. According to a report disseminated by the U.S. Department of Justice entitled An exemplary Project: Community Crime prevention, the Community Crime Prevention Program (CCPP) in Seattle Washington is an ideal program for implementation in other communities.<sup>6</sup> An assessment of the Seattle program by Betsy Lindsay and Daniel McGillis also praise the director of this program for his work in designing and implementation of the CCPP.

#### LEADING AUTHORS

A literature search focusing on active community crime control programs reveals that the most frequently cited writers on this subject are the following: Curtis, Washins, Chelmsky, Dubow and Podolefsky, Marx and Archer, Skogan and Maxfield, Trojanowicz, Yin, Coffey and Lavrakas, and Newman.

Oscar Newman supports the view that citizens of a community have a major role in crime control. He believes improved environmental designs will increase community vigilance and allow individual citizens to deter crime by reducing opportunities. He advocates active community involvement and argues that police alone cannot control crime. Citizens must adopt this function through environmental design and active community action. In turn, this will:

Catalyze the natural impulse of residence, rather than forcing them to surrender their shared social responsibilities to any formal authority.<sup>7</sup>

Paul J. Lavrakas is currently one of the top specialists in the field today. His research focuses on middle-class individuals who seek membership in anti-crime groups. His work reveals that fear of crime is not a primary factor motivating patrol membership. He supports pro-citizen involvement in crime control. His writing style is lucid, his papers are well documented and reveal that he has reviewed the works of the trail-blazers of this field, known scholars like Fred Dubow, Janice Normoyle and Wesley Skogan.<sup>8</sup>

Skogan and Maxfield have completed numerous studies on citizen involvement. One of their major works was a study on citizen participation and the percentages of citizens that participate in neighborhood programs. They did extensive work in the 1970s and are cited frequently by current writers. Their 1981 book, Living with Crime:

Individual and Neighborhood Reactions, reinforces some of their earlier findings and added new controversial findings concerning demographic variables and level of participation in anticrime groups.<sup>9</sup>

Some of the findings in their 1981 publication are not controversial. The data show the lack of relationships between sexual gender and community crime control activism and the finding that older respondents were more likely than younger respondents to be activists is supported by other major studies.<sup>10</sup> One of the major controversial conclusions in their work was their conclusion that blacks were significantly more likely than others to report being involved in anti-crime groups. This point has been challenged by Washins and other scholars.<sup>11</sup>

Regarding the relationship between voluntary association membership and crime prevention activism, it is noted that Skogan and Maxfield conclude that involvement in anticrime groups is a reflection of "joining" rather than "crime-fighting" predispositions and that "a profile of general factors which lead people to become involved in community groups should also describe those who are linked to anticrime efforts".<sup>12</sup> Their 1982 findings are congruent with the research of Dubow and Podolefsky.<sup>13</sup>

Dubow and Podolefsky, as mention earlier, are pioneers in the involvement of citizens in crime control.<sup>14</sup> They have made many contributions to this field of study. Dubow and Podolefsky examined differences between participants in



anticrime groups and participants in community groups that did nothing concerning crime. They found no significant, meaningful difference between these two groups in terms of a host of demographic, behavioral, and attitudinal measures, although they did conclude that participants in both of these groups were different from nonparticipants on a number of dimensions. Unlike the nonparticipants, the participants generally believe they have a commitment to the community and they wished to support the police in their efforts to control crime.<sup>15</sup> This can aid people who want to establish an anti-crime group but are facing opposition who feel anti-crime groups will only attract vigilantes and "John Wayne" types.

Washins has written several books on community crime control programs and completed studies in that area. One of his often quoted and controversial studies showed that whites are more active in community crime prevention than any racial groups. He also believes it is more difficult to organize and maintain the involvement of low income groups than middle income groups and that economic differences are more significant than racial ones in terms of gaining community interest. He is an advocate for citizen involvement and has stated quite often that citizens must experience a positive contact with the police. But he has a clear focus on the realities of endeavoring to organize lower income groups.<sup>16</sup>

Robert Yin published a great number of works while

associated with the United States Department of Justice and the Rand Corporation. He has conducted several studies on middle-class communities and crime control. He has voiced some concern over the possibility of vigilantes working their way into active crime control programs. In 1976, as the result of a survey he completed, Yin stated there were at least 800 anti-crime patrols in the United States.<sup>17</sup> Today, there are more than that many in the state of New York alone. These patrols operate under the concept of deterrence.

#### DETERRENCE

Active community law enforcement programs involve techniques such as: training in methods of personal protection against crime, neighborhood watch groups, block clubs, citizen patrols and use of citizen-band radios. A 1980 review of "Citizen Crime Prevention Tactics" published by the National Criminal Justice Reference Service notes that most of the strategies covered and recommended were of this type and based on the deterrence model.<sup>18</sup>

In theory, the deterrence model is effective because the potential offender may be deterred, or a crime in progress thwarted, by the high probability of detection, apprehension, and punishment resulting from increased levels of security.<sup>19</sup> In either case, there is a need for both adequate security and effective police forces to create

effective deterrence and prevention programs. It also presumes the development of close citizen-police ties. Examples of this relationship are cited by Gross and include a Citizen's Local Alliance for a Safer Philadelphia (CLASP), the Seattle Community Crime Prevention Program, and the Guardian Angels.<sup>20</sup>

This approach attempts to transform reactive police agencies into pro-active organizations which no longer await the commission of a crime before intervening. Active community crime control programs are not without problems, and their critics. A problem inherent in this approach is that it reverses the traditional emphasis in American society of freedom from governmental surveillance and intervention. Public police agencies have traditionally been limited to intervening in social problems only after the occurrence of a criminal violation, or where a clear danger to public safety is evident in a given situation. Critics of this approach to crime prevention believe it routinizes new types and levels of police intervention. It legitimizes and attempts to increase police sponsored intelligence gathering operations as active community crime control programs.<sup>21</sup>

Critics further state that in view of the fact that the deterrence model of crime prevention depends on the efficiency punishment and the reaction of the criminal justice system, it will fail because swift and sure punishment is not a characteristic of criminal justice

systems. Any crime prevention model which depends on the deterrence capacity of the criminal justice system cannot be expected to be effective. Furthermore if individual community law enforcement programs are implemented without collective community action, the members may find themselves isolate from the rest of the community. This, in turn, may make a community more vulnerable to crime as individual members become more isolated from each other.<sup>22</sup>

There are those who argue that community crime control programs appear to be oriented toward middle class communities that experience high levels of burglaries and threats to the person. Community crime control is needed most in lower income communities with high crime rates but these programs are not effective. Recent studies indicate that economic conditions have a greater negative impact on the establishment of active crime prevention programs than race or high levels of crime. Others argue that community crime control programs are effective when they show an actual ability to reduce crime and, at the same time, they reduce the fear of crime as perceived by citizens.

#### Fear of Crime

The reason for giving "fear" equal emphasis with "crime" has two main elements: Fear can affect everyone, whether or not victimization occurs; and fear is often

exaggerated, bearing little relation to crime.<sup>23</sup>

Recent empirical research has focused on victims of crime, the context of their victimization, and the fear of crime. Much of this research is atheoretical; however, some of its findings are important for any future theory-building, particularly among progressives attempting to incorporate community and neighborhood into the framework of analysis.<sup>24</sup>

Fear of crime can have negative effects on the social and economic fabric of cities. Although fear can have a reasonable basis in documented levels of crime, research has found that fear often exceeds what might be considered rational levels and is unrelated to the individual's personal probability of victimization.<sup>25</sup>

In 1981, Skogan and Maxfield completed a study of heterogeneous neighborhoods in different sections of the country. The research points to the fact that fear of crime and reaction to crime are complex issues not easily separated from their community contexts. According to the data from their study, some of the most fearful people live in areas with the lowest rates of crime. This tends to be related to burglary, a crime that has the most "spread"; that is, the rate of burglary is high in affluent areas as well as in poor areas and race does not appear to be an important variable. Concern about becoming a victim of crime is not confined to areas of high crime rates but exist also in places that have a low incidence of more serious

types of crime.<sup>26</sup>

Stanley K. Shernock conducted a study which developed a profile of the citizen crime prevention activist. In this study, Shernock compares crime prevention activists and nonactivists. One of the specific aspects he examined was fear of crime and individual reaction to crime.

His findings indicated that activists feel no greater sense of threat in their neighborhoods than do nonactivists. No relationship was found between crime prevention activism and feelings of safety at night, feelings of safety during the day, or overall feelings of safety.<sup>27</sup> This is a contradiction of Washins' observation that block clubs result from the general fear of crime.<sup>28</sup> Shernock's findings also differ from Skogan and Maxfield's findings that those who were less fearful of crime were more likely to report being involved in a group that was doing something about crime.<sup>29</sup> The above findings are often used when examining the issue of vigilantism.

### Vigilantism

Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary defines vigilante as: watchman, guard; member of a volunteer committee of citizens organized to suppress and punish crime summarily as when the process of law appear inadequate.<sup>30</sup> This definition leaves room for both positive and negative connotations of vigilante groups.

Under this broad definition, the history of vigilante groups in this country also has negative and positive connotations in American society. Citizens performed watch duties in the 1800s. In the western expansion period of the United States, homesteaders and townspeople protecting their families and homes were viewed as a necessary response to criminal activity.<sup>31</sup> This is a stark contrast to the 1930s through the 1960s when organizations like the Ku Klux Klan sought to deprive individuals of their rights to civil liberties on the basis of race, religion and national origin.<sup>32</sup>

When attempting to address vigilantism, in relation to community crime control as known today, a limited definition of vigilantism is needed. The term vigilantism in this research will refer to "illicit behavior", such as harassment or violation of civil liberties of individuals by citizen participants in community crime control programs."<sup>33</sup>

Citizens formed community crime control groups as a result of urban unrest, rising crime rates, and the perception that the police were unable or unwilling to curb crime. This environment awakened the growth of community crime prevention programs and also placed obstacles before it.<sup>34</sup> Police, by virtue of their position, often become targets of anti-government movements. Terms such as "pig" were used to describe police officers and police used labels such as "punk" and "meddlers" to describe citizens. Police have sometimes over reacted when responding to civil

disorder. This conflict further isolated the police, who had already effectively isolated themselves from much of the urban populace by incorporating vehicle patrols and large police precincts, police began to see urban police work as a struggle of "us against them". There is no doubt that many minority neighborhood citizens also felt victimized by agents of social control. One of the earliest community crime control groups was one which developed with members who possessed a negative police attitude:

When municipal officials of Oakland, California squelched civilian proposal to establish a community police review mechanism in 1966, black militants led by Huey Newton established the Black Panther Party for self-defense. The Black Panthers subsequently initiated patrols to observe the police, minimize acts of police brutality, inform citizens of their rights when interacting with the police, and protect the community from harm.<sup>35</sup>

With this type of beginning, it is easy to understand the cautious police attitudes concerning community crime control programs, and the fear these might become an organization fostering the emergence of vigilantes.

These original fears still persist among some police officers and scholars. However a comprehensive review of the literature has shown that, for the most part, vigilante action is an issue that can be controlled and it is not a common characteristic of community crime control citizen advocates.

In 1977, the U.S. Department of Justice conducted a national evaluation of citizen patrol projects. They found that "contemporary resident patrols appears to be only



occasionally susceptible to vigilantism". They also found that the mass media would often suggest that vigilantism was more wide spread than it actually was.<sup>36</sup>

It is estimated that in the United States today, there are about five million citizens that are members of active crime control groups.<sup>37</sup> Most of these belong to organizations such as Neighborhood Watch. These groups are believers in the deterrence model and believe that their increased vigilance will deter crime in their neighborhoods. The method of observation they utilize to deter crime varies from group to group. Some groups use privately owned cars equipped with two-way-radios, others patrol on foot and use walkie-talkies, and many simply encourage fellow members to be more observant in their daily activities and to alert the police via phone if they see any suspicious activity.<sup>38</sup> The majority of these groups have contact with the police. They often invite police to attend meetings and some groups are given limited training by the police. The vast majority of these groups advocate that their members are not police officers and that if members observe a crime they notify the police and do not directly interfere. This method of operation is for their own safety and the safety of others. Because of this method of operation, their patrol duties are often considered boring and routine. For the most part these groups see themselves as supplementing the police... not opposing them. Currently, many police departments actively recruit and encourage participation of this type.<sup>39</sup>

These groups do not fall within the definition of vigilantes. Their method of operation encourages cooperation with the police and the policy of indirect intervention helps them to stay within the guidelines of the criminal justice system. However, there are groups that do fit the definition of vigilante organizations.

The Guardian Angels, one of the most well known vigilante groups, originated in New York City. There are chapters in numerous cities at this time. The membership of this organization is primarily made up of Hispanic and Black youths. Their method of operation is high visibility and direct intervention. When they go on patrol they don red berets and distinctive shirts that identify them as members of the Guardian Angels.

Their primary activity is patrolling the subways and select areas of cities that have high incidents of robbery and assault. Members of this group are trained in self defense, first aid, and citizen arrest powers.

The effectiveness of the Guardian Angels and other vigilante groups as a crime control measure has not been determined. Generally, the Guardian Angels are not supported by the police; however in some cities the police do have some positive interaction with the group. The feelings of non members are also mixed. Some subway riders say they feel safer when they observe a group of Guardian Angels on board. Others view them as a visible sign that law enforcement officials are unable to do their job.<sup>40</sup>

Vigilante groups are not popular at this time. Many scholars believe that true vigilante groups cannot survive if they do not have either strong community backing or police support. Additionally, vigilante organizations are often racist groups that vent their anger towards a select few. The Ku Klux Klan is an example of racist vigilantism at its worst. The Guardian Angels, on the other hand, are considered by some to be a rational reaction of frustrated citizens to unacceptably high crime rates. Yet the distinctively different method of operations these groups employ still clearly qualifies them as vigilante groups.

Fortunately, as Yin, Washins, Coffey and other scholars have noted, vigilantism is not a popular feature of most community crime control groups today. But, because vigilantism is not totally absent in society today, leaders of community crime control program must insure steps are taken to reduce the risk of vigilante growth when initiating and developing active crime control programs.

#### DEVELOPING AND INITIATING COMMUNITY CRIME CONTROL PROGRAMS

In 1979, Krajick stated that the most promising crime prevention programs are those in which the police are involved the least and the citizens do most of the work. Police officials have realized that the community must be involved in crime prevention programs to ensure their success. Krajick takes a critical look at the role of

the police department in crime prevention. Some believe the police force is the obvious agent for keeping the community together because it is institutionalized, while community groups may disperse after having solved a particular neighborhood problem.<sup>41</sup> Others believe the police are not very effective at organizing crime prevention projects. Douglas Frisbie, director of the Minnesota Crime Prevention Institute, says a more productive role for the police force would be to act as coordinator for a community group, the base of this crime prevention philosophy being that the citizens should be responsible for their communities.<sup>42</sup>

McAttee writing in favor of community-initiated crime prevention states that:

If we really intend to combat the problem, let's start at the grass-roots level with community action committees who can best pool and coordinate the local resources available to combat crime. I believe that an informed, concerned, and aroused citizenry can have a tremendous impact on the causative factors of crime and delinquency, and that local community committees, dedicated to this effort and utilizing local community resources, can...prevent crime.<sup>43</sup>

There is a general consensus among criminal justice scholars and practitioners that expert leadership is necessary for effective crime control programs regardless of who coordinates them.

#### LEADERSHIP

An historical view of the literature reveals that Yin,

as far back as the 1960s, realized that leadership is a key element in developing effective community crime control programs.<sup>44</sup> Others have echoed this concern.<sup>45</sup> Coffey, Washnis, and Lavrakas all agree that strong leadership is essential when initiating and sustaining community based crime control. In the following passage, Washnis adequately describes the importance of leadership at the block level:

More than anything else, block club viability depends on the strength and personal qualities of block leaders. A good leader, vitally interested in the neighborhood, can hold most groups together and motivate them in fulfilling certain agreed upon objectives.<sup>46</sup>

Likewise, Skogan and Maxfield emphasize the importance of leadership at the grassroot level. Unfortunately like Washnis they too failed to thoroughly research the important area of leadership at the lowest level of community crime control. Rich did conduct a study on the dynamics of leadership in neighborhood organization; however, as Shernock points out, too few have elaborated on the role of the leader at the block level. Conversely, there is a wealth of information and controversies as to who should provide leadership above the block level.<sup>47</sup>

In 1978 the National Crime Prevention Institute, School of Police Administration, University of Louisville published The Practice of Crime Prevention. The authors of this book identified the need for a crime prevention practitioner. Current scholars have also expressed the need for a person filling this role but have created different

titles such as "crime prevention officer" and "crime prevention expert." There is some debate over the issue of whether this person should be a sworn police officer or a civilian detached from the police department. But the experts do agree that the role of crime prevention practitioner must be filled because that role is vital to developing and sustaining solid community crime control programs.

The authors of The Practice of Crime Prevention give the following as a description of the general role of the Crime Prevention practitioner:

The central role of the crime prevention practitioner is the teacher, counselor and catalyst of individual action, group action and public policy action within the community. The goal of the practitioner's efforts is the establishment of a comprehensive, community-wide crime prevention program...His role in developing and sustaining crime prevention efforts, is primarily that of a stimulator and... coordinator of the efforts of others. He provides the means which enables other people to reduce criminal opportunity in their own environments.<sup>48</sup>

This "expert" should work with individual members of the community. In the early stages of the program it may be no more than informing individuals to lock bikes up at night or leave a porch light on after dark and other types of action that are no more than a reduction of carelessness. He should also work with the groups and organizations that make up the community, because self-protection by potential victims could isolate members of the community and might cause them to be more susceptible to crime.

The National Crime Prevention Institute believes the

role of the crime prevention practitioner involves a set of complementary and interacting roles in which he:

1. Supports individual action;
2. Supports group action;
3. Guides public policy decisions; and Develops the comprehensive crime prevention program.<sup>49</sup>

The following is a summation of the Crime Prevention Institute and current authors views on the roles of crime prevention practitioner:

Supporting Individual Action:

In this capacity the crime prevention practitioner tries to teach individuals, families, businesses and others how to reduce their own crime risks. The individual community members will have to both learn and apply new skills. The practitioner should be an expert in knowing how to teach these skills so as to achieve maximum impact on others individuals.

Efforts to improve security at the individual level usually commence with public education programs and public awareness campaigns. Pamphlets and brochures are developed and distributed which show the homeowner or the businessman how to apply security devices and procedures. Distribution of brochures may be coupled with exhibits in shopping centers or other public places, television and radio public service announcements, newspaper articles, and personal presentations in schools and at group meetings. The crime prevention practitioner, to be effective, must learn how to

motivate as well as to transmit practical knowledge. He must learn that new ways of doing things, once taught, must be reinforced time and time again before they become habitual actions. This task can be made easier if the practitioner can develop individual action into group action.

An historical look at the history of crime prevention programs reveals that weak leadership is often the cause of community crime control programs being short lived. "Initial bursts of citizen enthusiasm have too often faded without providing a permanent base of community support due to a lack of strong leaders capable of maintaining public interest in crime prevention." Strong leadership may be able to sustain group action by overcoming the problems surrounding such action and the failure of others to join the group.

#### Supporting Group Action:

At this point in the crime prevention program, "the practitioner becomes primarily concerned with actions of a group nature which tend to reduce the risk of each member of a given population whether or not that person is willing to, or capable of, taking appropriate individual action." The practitioner's role at the group action level is to stimulate action which will not only be of great help to the careful individual in reducing his crime risk, but also will be of some help to the individual who cannot or will not take appropriate action on his own behalf.



Neighborhood Watch programs and Home Alert are popular programs of this type. With the help of the crime prevention practitioner, residents in a given neighborhood organize themselves to watch for suspicious circumstances and to report these circumstances to police. Participants are encouraged to take improved security precautions in their homes and in their daily lives.

Sustaining Group Action is an important issue because group action can be useful in reducing crimes against people in a geographic area or population group, whether or not each person in the area or group chooses to participate, and whether or not displacement results. But, such reduction, once gained, may not remain in effect if group action ceases. Increases in physical security does have the advantage of remaining in place. On the other hand, a group activity, such as Neighborhood Watch, may retain its opportunity reduction effect only as long as it continues to operate.<sup>50</sup>

Opponents of community crime control point out that there is much evidence to indicate that crime prevention efforts by individuals and groups are not necessarily self-perpetuating. Once people feel that they have achieved some success, or they simply become bored, their efforts may dwindle or cease altogether. If this occurs, it is logical to expect that, sooner or later, criminal activity will revert to its original levels or higher. Thus, the

practitioner must help sustain collective action in order to avoid the likely consequences of a short lived program.

A short-lived project may have a negative effect on a neighborhood. Initially it is relatively easy to get a significant numbers of people to participate in crime prevention activities. But if the activities cease, and crime then returns to its former levels, people may become disillusioned because they feel their efforts were wasted. It then may become difficult to obtain positive responses to crime prevention projects in the future and crime control officials may be led to conclude, erroneously, that citizens are apathetic.

#### Guiding Public Policy Decisions:

The practitioner's role at this level is to identify the ways in which public policy action can support and extend individual and group action, and to guide the decision-making process leading to appropriate public policy action. Simply put, the practitioner is the intermediary between the crime prevention-related needs of individuals and groups in the community and the development and coordination of action by government on behalf of groups and individuals. In this capacity the practitioners must be able to accurately relay the wants and needs of the people to the government and then be able to develop a crime prevention program that can successfully operate within the mandates of that government.

The development of a sound community crime control program requires more than a good working relationship between crime prevention experts and the citizens of a community. The local government can make decisions that immediately impact on crime prevention programs. Such as the decision to support a comprehensive jurisdiction-wide crime prevention program. A policy of this type might insure that community crime control programs receive adequate funding and support for both implementation and evaluation of their programs. This type of funding might be channeled directly to the programs or through the police department's crime control budget.

A popular view of the police role in community crime control programs is that active participation by law enforcement organizations is essential to the success of the community crime prevention program. Community crime control groups must work with police and other community officials to ensure that proper vigilantism does not develop. The police are responsible for responding to and investigating reported crimes and for conducting a wide variety of peace-keeping activities, it is up to the police to create and maintain the threat that a criminal will be identified and arrested. This threat is a basic part of many crime prevention strategies. In this type of strategy, citizen groups are limited to the roles of observers and reporters.

As a primary source of information on crime patterns,

police agencies can provide guidance to the community on prevailing kinds of crime and the specific attack-methods used by criminals.

With the abandonment of the "hue and cry" the police have been given the responsibility of maintaining the public safety and security. Since then the police have developed to where they now are at the position to provide technical expertise for the anticipation, recognition and appraisal of crime risks and for the design of actions to remove or reduce crime risks. Because of this expertise, the police can be the primary source of public education campaigns in crime prevention and the communications hub that coordinates all crime prevention activity in a given jurisdiction.

Many police departments now have crime prevention units or crime prevention bureaus. In some cases, the activities conducted are jurisdiction-wide and comprehensive in scope. In other cases, they are limited to individual client counselling services and a few special projects. In any case, each police department should develop an organizational unit with specific crime prevention responsibilities. Police crime prevention programs, therefore, must rely on the cooperation and voluntary participation of individuals and groups. The police role should be that of an educational, technical and supportive resource...an "enabler" rather than a primary "doer".

Some scholars have raised objection to direct control

of community crime control programs by the police.

Michalowski specifically addresses the issue of citizen patrols and police control.

Some police departments may respond positively to the idea of citizen patrols-as long as they are under the direction and control of the police department itself...This must be avoided. While they should work closely with local governments and police forces, citizen patrols should neither accept any monies from them, nor permit police departments or city governments to have any administrative or policy-making role in their operations.<sup>51</sup>

### Private Security

Government law enforcement agencies such as city police forces, sheriff's departments, state highway patrols, state bureaus of investigation, the Federal Bureau of Investigation and other federal agencies are the most visible means by which society maintains public safety and public order. These are not the only uniformed forces that play a role in crime prevention. A vast and diverse security industry in this country now performs many of the same functions on a private basis. The duties of the private security industry include but are not limited to:

1. Guard, patrol, armored car, and other protective services;
2. Security analysis, consultation and management; and,
3. Manufacture, distribution, sales, and installation of physical and electronic security devices and materials.<sup>52</sup>

Historically, the private security industry in the

Historically, the private security industry in the United States has been involved in protection and loss reduction of business assets. Businessmen find that the fee required to pay private security forces is more advantageous than to depend on local law enforcement agencies for protection. A disturbing trend that is now taking place is that some middle class neighborhoods are beginning to contract private security companies to patrol their residential neighborhoods. Critics of this practice argue that this type of activity could eventually undermine the tax base needed to support public law enforcement functions in lower class neighborhoods, along with causing displacement of crime to middle and lower income communities that choose not to contract private guards.

The private security industries are not well coordinated in their efforts, and there has been little in the way of minimum performance standards within or affecting most of the industry. Nevertheless, many of the security devices that are used by today's crime prevention practitioner have been adopted or adapted from private security.

The role of private security in comprehensive crime prevention programming is generally limited to middle and upper income citizens. Private security companies supplement and extend the crime prevention role of the police by supporting individual action, and to perform

services which the police cannot, such as management of security programs for private facilities, the installation of security devices, and the provision of a wide variety of security services for private customers. The cost of these services is beyond the range of low income families.

Opponents to this practice, that is now growing in popularity among middle class neighborhoods, predict serious consequences if the current trend continues to grow. They predict that middle class neighborhoods might rebel against paying taxes to support police that they feel are not needed because they have adequate private security. Any cuts in the middle class tax base would eventually undermine police activity in lower income communities.

In this chapter a number of issues and controversies were examined. The current writers in the field of community crime control are becoming more sophisticated in their method of evaluation and implementation of programs. Despite this increase in quality of research there is still much controversy surrounding the topics of fear and its effect on crime control programs, vigilantism, the role of the police, and demographics related to community crime control programs. In fact, the only issue for which there seems to be a clear understanding is that there is a need for sound leadership at both the block level and the practitioner level.

Though leadership has been identified as one of the

most important areas in the development of community crime control programs at the block level; little sound research has been conducted in that area. Conversely a wealth of information regarding leadership at the practitioner level does exist.

In the following chapter, conclusions and recommendations will be based on the material presented in chapters one, two, and three.



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## CHAPTER FOUR

### CONCLUSION

Throughout the history of the United States the roles played by citizens in community crime control has fluctuated. Prior to the 1800s citizens actively participated as members of the "hue and cry", but with the advent of industrialization and large metropolitan areas, citizens chose to pay others to take on the responsibility of crime control. As a result of this delegation of authority it eventually became possible for police administrators and the police on neighborhood beats to be viewed as the first line of defense against crime and juvenile delinquency. But with soaring delinquency rates and crime levels reaching new highs, by the 1930s criminologists and social scientists began to understand that the community as a whole and not the police alone were responsible for the suppression of crime.

The initial effort in community crime control was limited to an attempt to reduce the number of juvenile delinquents in hopes that this would eventually reduce the number of criminals. This view remained popular from the 1930s to the 1950s.

The turbulence of the 1960s ushered in a new concept of community control. Distrust of government, high crime rates, and urban plight sparked the growth of community crime control programs as we know them today.

Police were opposed to these groups. Some groups, rightfully or wrongfully, accused police of failing to suppress crime in their neighborhoods and accused the police of brutality and apathy towards crime problems in lower class neighborhoods. This friction played a role in distancing the police from the community and limiting community support for the police.

In the 1970s, the law enforcement assistance administration provided a great deal of funding to examine the effectiveness and potential of community crime control programs. This, in turn, fostered a rapid expansion of community crime control programs and increased the willingness of police administrators to help organize and implement community based programs.

As a result of the LEAA program, findings are mixed and often controversial. This is due, in part, to the lack of sound data and evaluation procedures of the criminal justice system prior to the 1970s. But the LEAA did pave the way for incorporating new data collecting procedures and the implementation of scientific evaluation of the criminal justice system in general and community crime control programs evaluation.

An historical review of the literature showed that citizen have never completely relinquished their obligation to help control crime. In fact, they have often expressed their desire to do their part when the government has been

unable to provide the degree of crime control citizens feel is adequate. Historically, this form of citizen action has been seen as either positive or negative vigilantism..

During the westward expansion, because of vast land areas and to few law enforcement officials, vigilantism was seen as a necessary form of community crime control. However, vigilantism today is seen in a negative light and with few exceptions is not a characteristic of most anti-crime groups.

Whether community crime control programs truly benefit lower-class communities is still a subject of debate as well as the effect of displacement on neighborhoods that do not participate in community crime control programs. But the vast majority of police administrators as well as scholars in the field of criminal justice agree that community crime control efforts are needed if the level of crime in America is to be substantially reduced.

A key element to the establishment of solid crime control program is leadership. Strong leadership can often overcome economic and racial problems of a community.

There is not a clear consensus as to whether the crime prevention specialist assisting community crime control groups should be a sworn police officer or a civilian. However, there is a consensus that he or she should be a highly trained individual familiar with not only crime prevention strategy but with local police, government, and



community wants and needs.

It's likely that this person may be a sworn police officer or at one time have been a police officer. However with proper training and experience it is possible for this person to be a civilian who is not employed by the local police. In addition to effective leadership at the practitioner level, strong leadership at the grass-root level is needed.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

Leadership at the practitioner level is often important in the establishment of community crime control programs and sometimes vital to program survivability. There is a wealth of information available to professional crime control practitioners but no one source exists as the definitive leader in training, informing, and coordinating new and innovative procedures in crime prevention. A national clearinghouse of information on crime control is needed. The development of a National University of Crime Prevention would meet this need. This institution would be an institution for crime prevention practitioners rather than a school of law enforcement.

A review of the literature has shown that community crime control programs can be developed where they are needed most, "in lower income neighborhoods". But the probability of their success is low and the life-span short.

Dynamic leadership at the community or block level can fuse together both the community and crime control groups. The critical task is to understand how leaders from lower income communities have become successful. There have been several studies on the importance of leadership but too few have been constructed to gather information on grass-root leaders and methods they have successfully employed. Efforts have been made to interview police chiefs and crime control experts but the scholarly research has virtually overlooked the local or indigenous leader.

To correct this gap in knowledge the federal government should design a national program that will identify the knowledge and know-how of successful local leaders. An extra effort should be made to reach leaders in lower income neighborhoods who have succeeded in organizing and sustaining crime control programs at the block level.

The method employed to gather information from these leaders can take several forms. One method might facilitate the use of a researcher who would locate programs that have been in existence for over four years and are considered by both the police and the community to be sound programs. They would then locate the neighborhood leaders and conduct extensive interviews that would concentrate on determining how and why these leaders are successful.

Another method would be to have a national convention on crime control that emphasizes the attendance of the most

effective low income anti-crime group leaders. This approach has many limitations that would have to be overcome. A selection criteria for successful programs would have to be established, then a determination whether leadership at the lower level played a major role in the program success; if so, the leader would be identified and encouraged to participate in the conference in order to help other learn from his or her experience. If the leaders of successful low income anti-crime programs agree to participate in such a conference, new problems must be resolved. There is a high probability that invited participants will be unable to meet the expenses of attending a conference of this type. Lost wages, food and housing costs would all play a part in determining the feasibility of planing a conference of this type.

Once the participants are brought together the process of collecting or taping the valuable information to be obtained from local leaders may prove difficult. Many of these individuals will be articulate and able to effectively communicate the policies, procedures, and methods they used to develop effective crime prevention programs in their communities, others may find that they cannot express themselves effectively in this type of forum.

There is no doubt that to undertake a program of this magnitude will provide unique challenges and require substantial financial resources. But the wealth of

information that can be gained from people who know "first-hand" what its like to live in neighborhoods that are plagued with crime and violence and who have effectively established programs that either reduce the fear of crime or amount of crime committed in their neighborhoods will be well worth the effort and money expended.

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